

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--(vi) A chimeric sIL-6R/IL-6 protein, being the herein designated sIL-6R δ Val/L/IL-6 having a 13 amino acid peptide linker of sequence E-F-G-A-G-L-V-L-G-G-Q-F-M (SEQ ID NO:1) between the C-terminal Val-356 of sIL-6R and the N-terminal Pro-29 of IL-6, said chimeric protein having the sequence of SEQ ID NO:13, i.e., the sequence set forth in Fig. 3 wherein the tripeptide of sequence E-F-M at positions 357-359 of Fig. 3 is replaced by said 13 amino acid peptide sequence.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 30, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--As indicated above, an advantageous characteristic of the sIL-6R δ Val/IL-6 construct is that it is essentially the fusion of the natural form of sIL-6R and of the natural form of IL-6 as they exist in the human body, and without extraneous polypeptide sequences. However, the conservation of the EcoRI site in the sIL-6R δ Val/IL-6 construct (Figure 1) allows to easily introduce linker polypeptide segments between the sIL-6R and the IL-6 moieties. One such construct with the 13-amino acid linker sequence Glu-Phe-Gly-Ala-Gly-Leu-Val-Leu-

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Gly-Gly-Gln-Phe-Met (SEQ ID NO:1) introduced between Val-356
of sIL-6R and Pro-29 of IL-6, was also constructed (sIL-
6R δ Val/L/IL-6) (SEQ ID NO:13).--